

TELEGRAM

Foreign Service of the ⁽³⁾
United States of America

INCOMING

AMEMBASSY BRASILIA

DEF-6

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

Classification

Control: USDAO RIO
0854

Recd: NOV 6, 1970

ACTION

POL

INFO

ATTACHE

CHRON

RF-2

P 061440Z NOV 70

FM USDAO RIO DE JANEIRO

TO RUEKJCS/DIA

INFO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC

RUEKJCS/OASD-ISA

RUEKJCS/OJCS

RUESVB/USCINCSO (J-2)

RUEADWD/OACSI, DA

RULPAK/USARSO (G-2)

RUESUZ/AMEMBASSY BRASILIA

RUESUP/AMCONSUL SAO PAULO

RUESEI/AMCONSUL RECIFE

BT

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~ 0854. FM ARMA. NOV 70.

1. (U) INFORMATION IN THIS MESSAGE OBTAINED AT RESIDENCE OF GEN MURICY, ARMY CHIEF OF STAFF, ON EVENING 5 NOV DURING DINNER IN HONOR OF CG USARSO AND MRS. CHESTER L. JOHNSON. IMPRESSIVE GUEST LIST INCLUDED: ARMY MINISTER AND MRS. GEISEL, GENERAL AND MRS. FRAGOSO, GENERAL AND MRS. MALAN, GENERAL AND MRS. RODRIGO OCTAVIO, GENERAL AND MRS. ARAGAO, GENERAL AND MRS. SARDENBERG, GENERAL NAHON, MAJ GEN AND MRS. BINA MACHADO, MAJ GEN AND MRS. REYNALDO MELLO DE ALMEIDA, MAJ GEN AND MRS. CORREIA, AND BRIG GENERAL CALDERARI, PAULA COUTO, AND POTYGUARA.

2. (S) I PROBED SPECIFICALLY IN AREA OF "OPERATION BIRDCAGE" DRAGNET OF PAST SEVERAL DAYS AND FOUND GENERALS MURICY, SARDENBERG, REYNALDO, CALDERARI, AND POTYGUARA EXTREMELY FORTHCOMING AS FOLLOWS:

A. GEN MURICY: ACTION WAS DIRECTED FROM BRASILIA AND DESIGNED TO ACHIEVE THREE OBJECTIVES: (1) A SHOW OF FORCE IN FACE OF KNOWLEDGE OF EXISTING THREAT TO STABILITY; (2) INTIMIDATION OF THOSE KNOWN TO SYMPATHIZE WITH RADICAL/LIBERAL CAUSES, AND (3) CAPTURE OF TERRORISTS THROUGH RAIDS ON SAFE-HOUSES IDENTIFIED AS A RESULT OF INTERROGATIONS AND INFORMATION FROM LATE CAMARA FERREIRA'S PAPERS. IN THE VIEW OF CHIEF OF STAFF, ABOUT 400 PEOPLE DETAINED NATION-WIDE, WITH 240 IN SAO PAULO AND 76 IN

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GUANABARA. HE FEELS ARREST OF SUCH INDIVIDUALS AS LAWYER HELENO FRAGOSO UNFORTUNATE AND DEPLORES CERTAIN NEGATIVE FALLOUT ON BRAZIL'S INTERNATIONAL IMAGE. HE DISPLAYED NO RESPECT FOR FRAGOSO AND DESCRIBED HIM AS MONEY-HUNGRY MERCHANT IN WRIT OF HABEAS CORPUS RACKET, AND ONE OF FOREMOST DENIGRATORS OF BRAZIL ABROAD. GEN MURICY SAID THAT HE HAD TALKED WITH 1ST ARMY COMMANDER GENERAL SYSENO, SUGGESTING THAT "BIRDCAGE" LIST BE BROKEN DOWN INTO TWO OR MORE. ONE ROSTER WOULD HAVE NAMES OF INDIVIDUALS KNOWN TO BE DANGEROUS AND ACTIVISTS, ANOTHER WOULD LIST POLITICAL ENEMIES SUCH AS HELENO FRAGOSO. IN FUTURE, IMPLEMENTATION ORDERS WOULD SPECIFY LIST TO BE USED.

WHEN I ASKED GEN MURICY IF ROUNDUP FORCED UPON PRESIDENT, HE LAUGHED AND SAID THAT I KNEW MEDICI AND THE CURRENT BRAZILIAN SITUATION WELL ENOUGH TO REALIZE THAT SUCH AN EVENT NOT POSSIBLE. MEDICI IS HIS OWN BOSS, HE SAID, AND NO ONE WOULD DARE TRY TO IMPOSE UPON HIM SOMETHING HE DID NOT DESIRE.

B. GEN SARDENBERG: THE PRESIDENT OF THE JOINT BRAZIL-U.S. MILITARY COMMISSION AND A CLOSE FRIEND OF PRESIDENT MEDICI'S EXPRESSED ASTONISHMENT OVER THE ROUNDUP, PARTICULARLY AS IT AFFECTED WELL-KNOWN FIGURES. GEN SARDENBERG DID NOT BELIEVE THE EXISTING THREAT WARRANTED SUCH VIOLENT ACTION AND REGRETTED THE DAMAGE TO BRAZIL'S IMAGE. HE ALSO FEELS THAT THE GOVERNMENT'S PROSPECTS IN THE 15 NOVEMBER ELECTIONS WILL BE ADVERSELY AFFECTED. WHEN I ASKED IF THE ACTION COULD HAVE BEEN TAKEN WITHOUT THE PRESIDENT'S KNOWLEDGE, HE GAVE AN EMPHATIC NEGATIVE ANSWER. AS A BOYHOOD CONTEMPORARY AND CLASSMATE OF MEDICI'S, GEN SARDENBERG SAID THAT THE PRESIDENT WOULD NOT HESITATE IN RESIGNING IF ANYONE EXERTED CRUDE PRESSURES ON HIM. IN THE CURRENT CASE, SARDENBERG BELIEVES THE THREAT WAS EXAGGERATED WHEN PRESENTED TO MEDICI. MOREOVER, HE FEELS THAT MEDICI WAS NOT FULLY AWARE OF THE EXTENT TO WHICH THE "BIRDCAGE" LISTS HAD GROWN IN SOME AREAS. SARDENBERG DEFENDED NATIONAL INTELLIGENCE SERVICE CHIEF GEN FONTOURA AS "TOO BALANCED TO DO SUCH A THING". IT IS HIS OPINION THAT FEDERAL POLICE CHIEF WALTER PIRES DE ALBUQUERQUE PLAYED AN IMPORTANT ROLE IN TRIGGERING THE OPERATION.

C. GEN REYNALDO: THE ARMY DEPUTY CHIEF OF STAFF FEELS THAT WHOLE AFFAIR WAS STUPID AND FUTILE. HE ADVOCATES REFINED "GAIOLA" (BIRDCAGE) LISTS AND LESS OVER-REACTION. HE WAS ESPECIALLY UPSET OVER THE ARREST OF THE SO-CALLED INTELLECTUALS AND CRINGED AT THE

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THOUGHT OF ADDITIONAL EXPLOITATION BY BRAZIL'S ENEMIES ABROAD. IT IS HIS VIEW THAT PRESIDENT MEDICI WAS FULLY AWARE OF THE IMPLEMENTATION ORDER, AND THAT HE PROBABLY WAS MOST INFLUENCED IN FAVOR OF IT BY SNI CHIEF GEN FONTOURA. REYNALDO CONSIDERS FONTOURA A WEAK SISTER WHO RUNS SCARED OVER THE SLIGHTEST INDICATION OF SUBVERSION.

D. GEN CALDERARI: THE OPPORTUNISTIC ARMY STAFF SECRETARY GENERAL, ACKNOWLEDGED THAT SOME EXCESSES HAD BEEN COMMITTED AT LOWER LEVELS. HE BELIEVES THAT AVAILABLE EVIDENCE WARRANTED A MASSIVE PREVENTIVE OFFENSIVE BY SECURITY FORCES, EVEN AT THE RISK OF SOME ABUSES. HE TOOK CONSOLATION FROM THE FACT THAT NO ONE WAS HURT PHYSICALLY; SOME WOULD-BE ACTIVISTS MIGHT HAVE BEEN DETERRED; A FEW DANGEROUS INDIVIDUALS WERE ROUNDED UP TO FACE CHARGES FLOWING FROM STRONG EVIDENCE, AND THE SECURITY APPARATUS RECEIVED AN EXCELLENT WORKOUT. SOME LESSONS LEARNED, HE ADDED, WOULD BE INCORPORATED INTO STANDING ORDERS. GEN CALDERARI, WHO WAS CLOSELY IDENTIFIED WITH THE LATE PRESIDENT COSTA E SILVA, AVOWED WITH PERSUASIVE VIGOR THAT NO MAN IN BRAZIL WOULD DARE BY-PASS PRESIDENT MEDICI ON AN OPERATION AS IMPORTANT AND COMPREHENSIVE AS THIS WEEK'S "BIRDCAGE". HE ADMITTED THAT COSTA E SILVA WAS SUSCEPTIBLE TO BEING FINESSED IN SUCH MATTERS, BUT THAT MEDICI IS COMPLETELY INTOLERANT OF THE SLIGHTEST SCRATCH UPON HIS AUTHORITY.

E. GEN POTYGUARA: AS CHIEF OF THE ARMY MINISTER'S IMMEDIATE STAFF, GEN POTYGUARA IS THE MAN WHO DIRECTED THE ARMY INTELLIGENCE CENTER (BECAUSE OF THE SENIOR FOUR REGIONAL COMMANDERS ARE ARMY MEN AND BECAUSE OF THE CENTER'S SUPERIOR COMMUNICATIONS NET) TO TRIGGER THE ROUNDUP. HE SAID THAT HIS INSTRUCTIONS CAME FROM THE MINISTER, WHO WAS IN BRASILIA AT THE TIME, AND HAD RECEIVED THEM DIRECTLY FROM THE PRESIDENT. GEN POTYGUARA SAID THAT HE WAS SURPRISED WHEN HE LEARNED THAT LAWYERS HAD BEEN ARRESTED AND IMMEDIATELY ASKED THE MINISTER TO AUTHORIZE THAT THEY BE FREED. AT THE SAME TIME, HE ADDED, THE PRESIDENT HAD LEARNED OF THE EXTENT OF THE DRAGNET AND ORDERED THE RELEASE OF ALL BUT THOSE ABOUT WHOM THERE WAS REASONABLE DOUBT IN A SECURITY SENSE. POTYGUARA NORMALLY IS TOUGH IN SECURITY MATTERS, BUT HE DISPLAYED GENUINE CONCERN OVER THE EXCESSES OF LOCAL OFFICIALS AND THE DAMAGING IMPACT ON BRAZIL'S IMAGE.

3. (C) COMMENT: FROM THE FOREGOING CONVERSATIONS AND OTHERS WITH INDIVIDUALS SUCH AS COL BERGQVIST, ARMY

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G-3, AND COL DARCY JARDIM DE MATTOS, ARMY G-2, I AM CONVINCED THAT THE FOLLOWING OCCURRED AND WILL OCCUR:

A. MEDICI WAS ADVISED BY GEISEL, FONTOURA, AND WALTER PIRES, THAT A SIGNIFICANT SECURITY THREAT EXISTED. THIS CONCLUSION WAS BASED LARGELY ON THE IMPRESSIVE DOCUMENTATION WHICH BELONGED TO THE LATE EXTREMIST LEADER CAMARA FERREIRA. IT WAS CORROBORATED BY INFORMATION FROM THE INTERROGATION OF IMPORTANT TERRORIST.

B. MEDICI ORDERED "OPERATION BIRDCAGE."

C. NEITHER MEDICI NOR GEISEL HAD FULL KNOWLEDGE OF THE NAMES ON ALL REGIONAL DRAGNET LISTS.

D. LOCAL OFFICIALS TOOK IT UPON THEMSELVES TO EXCEED THEIR AUTHORITY.

E. MEDICI AND GEISEL IMMEDIATELY ISSUED CORRECTIVE ORDERS.

F. A GENERAL TIGHTENING UP - WITH GREATER CENTRALIZATION - IS LIKELY TO TAKE PLACE IN THE SECURITY AREA. FUTURE STANDING LISTS WILL BE APPROVED BY THE ARMY MINISTER WITH ADDITIONS OR DELETIONS SIMILARLY APPROVED. DIFFERENT LISTS WILL BE USED FOR VARYING DEGREES OF SECURITY THREATS.

G. SOME SENIOR INDIVIDUALS WILL BE REPRIMANDED FOR WHAT THEY HAVE DONE OR, AT A MINIMUM, THEY HAVE LOST THE PRESIDENT'S CONFIDENCE.

H. THERE WAS ABSOLUTELY NO CONNECTION BETWEEN "OPERATION BIRDCAGE" AND HARD-LINE, MODERATE-LINE, OR SOFT-LINE PRESSURES ON THE PRESIDENT.

I. THE FIGURE OF APPROXIMATELY 400 DETAINED NATIONALLY IS PROBABLY CLOSER TO THE TRUTH THAN WILD ESTIMATES FROM SOURCES OPPOSED TO THE GOVERNMENT.

J. THERE IS POSITIVELY NO CONNECTION BETWEEN "OPERATION BIRDCAGE" AND THE ROUTINE RESASSIGNMENT OF 2ND ARMY CG CANAVARRO FROM SAO PAULO TO RIO.

4. (U) THIS MESSAGE HAS BEEN COORDINATED WITH THE CHARGE AND POLITICAL SECTION. GP-3

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ACTION TAKEN

ACTION

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INFO

ATTACHE

CHRON

RF-2

R 311920Z AUG 70

FM USDAO/RIO DE JANEIRO

TO RUEKJCS/DIA

INFO RUEHC/DEPT OF STATE

RULPAL/USCINCSO (J-2)

RUESBA/USDAO BUENOS AIRES

RUESLZ/USDAO LA PAZ

RUESUZ/AMEMBASSY BRASILIA

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1. ~~(C/NF)~~ CHIEF LATIN AMERICAN SECTION, CENTRAL AGENCY OF NATIONAL INTELLIGENCE SERVICE, TOLD AARMA BRASILIA ON SATURDAY, 29 AUG, THAT WHEN ARGENTINE GENERAL LANUSSE VISITED BOLIVIA ABOUT THREE MONTHS AGO, HE ATTENDED A MEETING OF TOP BOLIVIAN MILITARY OFFICERS. AT THAT TIME HE REPORTEDLY TOLD BOLIVIAN ARMY CHIEF GEN MIRANDA THAT HE COULD COUNT ON SUPPORT OF ARGENTINE ARMY IN HIS CONFLICT WITH ARMED FORCES CHIEF TORRES. THE STATEMENT WAS MADE IN THE PRESENCE OF PRESIDENT GENERAL OVANDO CANDIA.

2. ~~(C/NF)~~ SOURCE CREDITS THIS OFFER/THREAT, OF ARGENTINE INTERVENTION AS ONE OF MAJOR FACTORS IN VICTORY OF "RIGHTIST" MIRANDA OVER "LEFTIST" TORRES IN THE RECENT POWER SHUFFLE WITHIN BOLIVIAN GOVERNMENT. FOR HIM OVANDO IS DANGEROUS AND WEAK LEADER OF NO IDEALOGY, BALANCING ON A FENCE WITHOUT KNOWING IF HE WANTS TO FALL TO LEFT OR RIGHT. BIG WORRY FOR BRAZIL IS UNCERTAINTY OVER WHO WILL TAKE HIS PLACE WHEN HE FALLS. ARMA COMMENT: ~~(C/NF)~~ A CONTINUING BROAD SAMPLING OF BRAZILIAN ARMY OFFICER CORPS REVEALS SUBSTANTIAL CONCERN OVER BOLIVIAN SITUATION. DESPITE PAST TENSIONS OVER VENEZUELA-GUAYANA CONTROVERSY AND MORE RECENT WORRY OVER URUGUAY, MOST DEEP-ROOTED PROBLEM AREA REMAINS BOLIVIA. THERE IS GENUINE FEAR THAT COUNTRY WILL

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SUCCUMB TO ANARCHY AND COMMUNISM WITH ATTENDANT
ESTABLISHMENT OF FREE-WHEELING CATALYST FOR DISRUPTION
OF PBRAZILIAN STABILITY. NO OFFICER SERIOUSLY BELIEVES
THAT BRAZILIAN MILITARY INTERVENTION WILL BE REQUIRED
BUT CONTINGENCY PLANNING REPORTEDLY INCLUDES THAT
POSSIBILITY. THERE APPEARS TO BE PREFERENCE TOWARD
TOLERATING SUBSTANTIAL ARGENTINE INVOLVEMENT IN SAFE-
GUARDING AGAINST ANARCHY/COMMUNISM EMERGING. CURRENT
BRAZILIAN STRATEGY ALSO INCLUDES TIGHTENING UP OF
BORDER SURVEILLANCE AND OCCASIONAL MANEUVERS (SHOW OF
FORCE) ALONG CONTIGUOUS AREAS.
GP-3.

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